



## Safety tips and sexual assault prevention from VDSS' Office of Family Violence

### *Motor vehicle safety:*

- Never leave your car unlocked, even if it's just for the few minutes.
- When driving, never pull over in an isolated area if someone pulls up beside you indicating you have car trouble or a flat tire. Wait until you get to a well-lit area or crowded area before exiting your car.
- Be alert in parking areas. If your "gut" tells you something isn't right, ask someone to escort you.
- Be aware of your surroundings — know who's out there and what's going on.
- Have your key ready to use before you reach the door — home, car or work.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Drive on well-traveled streets, with doors and windows locked.
- Never hitchhike or pick up a hitchhiker.
- Keep your car in good shape with plenty of gas in the tank.
- In case of car trouble, call for help on your cell phone. If you don't have a phone, put the hood up, lock the doors, and put a sign that says, "Help. Call police."

(From [www.safetyforwomen.com](http://www.safetyforwomen.com) and [www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov))

### *At home:*

- Don't prop open doors.
- Keep doors and windows locked.
- Watch your keys. Don't lend them. Don't leave them. Don't lose them. And don't put your name and address on the key ring.
- Watch out for unwanted visitors. Know who's on the other side of the door before you open it.

(From [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov))

### *When walking, jogging, shopping, etc.*

- Don't use music devices when you are walking or jogging alone
- Avoid walking or jogging alone, especially at night.
- Stay in well-traveled, well-lit areas.
- Regularly change your routine or path.

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- Be alert at all times.
- Walk with authority and with confidence. The more confident you look, the stronger you appear.
- Be assertive — don't let anyone violate your space.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable in your surroundings, leave.

(From [www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov))

***When out or in a college setting:***

- Find out about self-defense classes your college offers.
- Consider carrying personal protection such as pepper spray (where legal).
- Travel in pairs or groups if possible. If you are alone, be aware of your surroundings and avoid isolated shortcuts.
- Don't drink alcohol in excess.
- Don't accept drinks from other people.
- Open containers yourself.
- Keep your drink with you at all times, even when you go to the bathroom.
- Don't share drinks.
- Don't drink from punch bowls or other large, common, open containers. They may contain "date rape" drugs.
- Don't drink anything that tastes or smells strange. Some "date rape" drugs taste salty.
- Have a non-drinking friend with you.

(From [www.collegetips.com](http://www.collegetips.com) and [www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov))

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